

June 19, 2014

Dear Middle School students and families,

Summer vacation is here! In between swimming, cookouts, watermelon, and hikes we want to make sure you take time to keep your math skills sharp (see attached letter from Ms. Berberick), to read interesting books (see attached list from Mr. Curran), and to make informed choices at back-to-school sales.

Also, we wanted to let you know that by mid-August you will have received a postcard from your new advisor to let you know what advisory you will be in. School starts with "First Day, Hooray!" for students and families on **Wednesday, August 28**.

#### **SUPPLIES you will NEED**

- **Four 1½ inch 3-ring binders** (clear sleeve on front cover is helpful so you can keep a copy of your schedule on all your binders)
- **Four sets of binder dividers** (usually 5 in a pack)
- **Filler paper**
- **plenty of #2 pencils**
- **index cards**

#### **RECOMMENDED (not required) SUPPLIES**

- A scientific calculator in the \$10-\$20 range will meet your needs through the end of middle school.
- Graph paper
- Colored pencils
- Wire shelf for locker (fits inside locker to create a shelf for books and binders)

**DRESS CODE** *If you shop for "back to school" clothing, please select school-appropriate clothing*

- **Hats are not allowed in school**
- **Bare midriffs, low scooped tops, backless or T-back, tight fitting and "spaghetti" strap shirts may not be worn. Undergarments should not be visible. Sleeveless straps should be "three finger" wide.**
- **All skirts and shorts (exterior clothing) must be fingertip length. Even when worn with leggings or tight shorts underneath!**
- **Clothing that promotes alcohol, tobacco, drugs or negative messages towards a people or nation are not allowed.**

We look forward to welcoming our returning students and new students for a successful and engaging school year!

Your Advisors,

Ms.Toffolon, Mr.Linden, Mrs.Borofsky, Mrs.Ingram,  
Mr.Curran, Ms.Berberick, and Dan Seiden



**June 19, 2014**

Dear PCS Middle School Parents and Students,

I am pleased to write this letter of introduction and welcome to the rising 6th, 7th, and 8th grade math students. This year was my first at Putney Central, and as a paraeducator as well as an instructor in the after-school Math Lab program, I've enjoyed getting to know PCS's community of parents, teachers, and students. Next year I will be the middle school math teacher, a position I was happy to accept. A bit about my background- at the undergraduate and graduate levels of college, I studied math, sociology, and education, and currently I'm studying Educational Technology at Marlboro. I've taught math for over ten years in both public and private schools- middle school through upper level high school. I'm excited to work with middle school students again; teaching middle school math is engaging, dynamic, and certainly never dull!

This summer, I look forward to running the mindfulness camp in August at PCS, which some of you will attend. Mindfulness in education is an interesting field of study that connects mindfulness to brain function and learning. I enjoy sharing various exercises that help students focus, relax, and learn more effectively. This summer I will also be developing my Putney Central faculty page. Please check in for my personal bio, links for summer prep work, and information about the math curriculum. It will also be a place for parents and students to find homework assignments next year.

**Materials:**

1. Binder (1.5-2") with dividers
2. Hole-punched lined paper
3. Pencils
4. Graph paper (helpful, not required)
5. A scientific calculator (about \$10 at Staples) is not required, though it will be helpful to have one available for homework. *Students are encouraged to work through problems first without a calculator to build solid fundamental skills.*

If you need help purchasing these materials, please email me at [mberberick@putneycentral.org](mailto:mberberick@putneycentral.org).

**Summer Work:**

During the summer, students can lose a lot of what they learned in the school year; this is sometimes called the "summer slide". What sounds like fun can actually be very frustrating for students. At Putney Central, students are encouraged to complete math prep work during the summer. They will earn credit for this work, but it is not required.

This past Wednesday, I visited each math class and gave a tour of the free online math program Khan Academy ([www.khanacademy.org](http://www.khanacademy.org)). Students, I encourage you to show your family around the site. Have

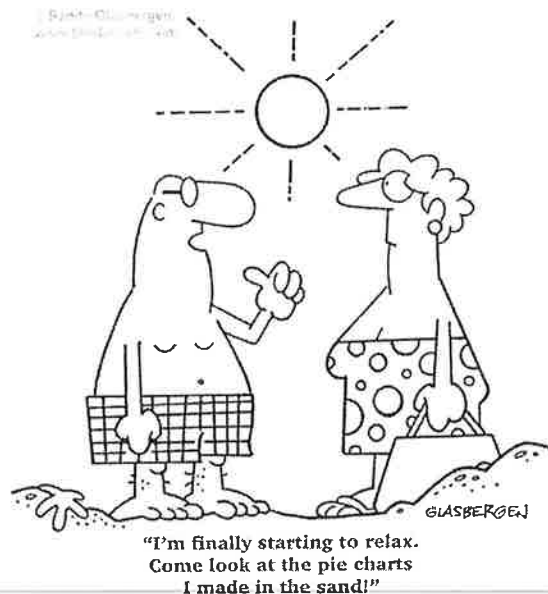
them try a few problems, and watch a video. Maybe earn a few points! To log in to Khan Academy, students should use their PCS Google account. They have already taken an assessment which tailors problems specifically to them. Not only does the program learn what the student knows and adjusts accordingly, students can monitor their own progress. Likewise, as their teacher, I have the benefit of viewing their growing skill set, and see which areas students need the most help. Students, be sure to go to the notification icon in the upper right hand corner of your home page and *accept me as your coach*. This enables me to see the work you complete. Another important note: the summer work students do on Khan Academy should focus on needed review rather than learning new material.

Students who prefer to work on paper, or who don't have reliable internet access over the summer, may request a packet to prepare for next year. Students are also encouraged to make summer math review more fun by carpooling or meeting up with classmates at the library to work on their Khan Academy. All students who decide to complete work over the summer will start out next year with some earned credit. More importantly, by setting aside some time to review math this summer, students will find they are much more prepared for school in the fall.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at [mberberick@putneycentral.org](mailto:mberberick@putneycentral.org)

Have a lovely summer. See you next year!

Sincerely,  
Ms. Mary Beth Berberick



## **Summer Reading 2014**

Reading is critical for life long learning, and more importantly it should not be viewed as something that should only be done throughout the school year. This summer, you will be required to read ONE FICTION and ONE NON-FICTION book. You can choose any book from one of these genres. Lists have been provided as suggestions, however, please feel free to read any book that interests you.

Please complete the follow graphic organizers for each of the books you read this summer. These organizers will be due on Friday September 5<sup>th</sup>. This will give you the chance to come into school for the first 7 days and ask any questions that you may have about how to complete the graphic organizers. Along with the graphic organizers there will be a creative assignment that will be assigned during the first week of school, which you will complete primarily in class using ONE of the books you read during the summer.

If there are any questions, please feel free to email me at:

[jcurran@putneycentral.org](mailto:jcurran@putneycentral.org)

I look forward to the upcoming school year; however, before then enjoy the

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summer – get outside, run, play, and read, read, read!

- MR. CURRAN -

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Book #1

\_\_\_\_\_

Title

\_\_\_\_\_

Author

An important event or idea in this book is (be sure to describe it)...

I chose this event as important because...

How does this book connect to your own personal life experiences, other pieces of literature, or historical events? Explain.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Book #1

Personal Reaction: Did you enjoy this book? Why or why not? Try to give some specific examples from the book of things you did or did not like.

A large rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for writing a personal reaction. The box is mostly empty, with a small portion of the bottom right corner folded over, creating a triangular shape. The fold is represented by two lines meeting at a point, with a small arc indicating the curve of the fold.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Book #2

\_\_\_\_\_

Title

\_\_\_\_\_

Author

An important event or idea in this book is (be sure to describe it)...

I chose this event as important because...

How does this book connect to your own personal life experiences, other pieces of literature, or historical events? Explain.



**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Book #2**

**Personal Reaction:** Did you enjoy this book? Why or why not? Try to give some specific examples from the book of things you did or did not like.

A large rectangular box for writing a personal reaction. The box is empty and has a small triangular cutout at the bottom right corner, resembling a folded piece of paper. The box is defined by a thin black border.

